



CABINET OFFICE
Central Policy Review Staff

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 6035

SECRET

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
10 Downing Street
SW1

010

Prime Minister - to see ² /

I do not think that you should see them. If you agree I will prepare a sympathetic reply, which I will clear with you.

Thompson md
FERB
20.6
16 June 1983 (recd. 20.6!)

Dear Prime Minister,

As a relative newcomer from the private sector to the CPRS I was taken aback by the reasons for the demise of the CPRS which Mr Sparrow reported to us all yesterday. If I understand your thinking correctly, you have become deeply concerned about the political sensitivity of some CPRS material which has leaked, and you perceive that only Mr Sparrow actually does anything.

As to the first point, it is, I believe, in the nature of the task we have had that awkward matters should be brought to Ministers' attention early. Presumably that will have to go on. Leaks are always deplorable, but are a separate matter, and I understand that there is no evidence to suggest that the CPRS has been responsible for them. As to the second point, CPRS members work hard in support of Mr Sparrow, both in documents which are clearly ascribable to the CPRS and in committee work, where our contribution frequently leads to a realignment of recommendations before they reach Ministers.

Even after only ten weeks in the CPRS, I believe that there is value in what the CPRS seeks to do by way of briefs and other forms of advice and analysis for Ministers (collectively and individually). It is disturbing that no successor arrangements are intended which might bring to bear a similar range of private and public sector thinking on the work of Cabinet.

My principal purpose in writing to you is thus to record the reservations I have about the effect of abolishing the CPRS. I cannot reasonably expect that you will have time to discuss it face to face, but if that were possible I should be extremely grateful. In the latter case, one or two of my private sector colleagues might also ask to add their views, but in writing to you I have acted alone and without consultation.

Yours sincerely,
Robert Young
R Young

SECRET



file

Bre

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

24 June 1983

I am writing to thank you on the Prime Minister's behalf for your letter of 16 June.

The Prime Minister understands why you and other members of the CPRS should have been disappointed by her decision to disband the CPRS, and it is natural that you should take the view that the balance of the arguments pointed to a different conclusion. You will by now be aware of the reasons for the Prime Minister's decision, which were set out in the public announcement: in brief they were that, while the Prime Minister considers that the CPRS has been a valuable source of collective advice to Ministers during the twelve years of its life, she and her Cabinet colleagues felt that, as a result of developments in the meantime, the purposes for which the CPRS was set up were now being met satisfactorily in other ways.

But I can assure you that the Prime Minister was not under any illusion that only Mr. Sparrow made any contribution to the work of the CPRS. She is well aware that he is ably supported by his team in CPRS and that they do much work on their own account, which she does not see directly. She paid public tribute to this work in the announcement about the CPRS. The Prime Minister thinks that you will agree that, now her decision has been taken and announced, it would not be profitable to go over the ground in a discussion but she would certainly not want you or any other member of the CPRS to feel that her decision was any reflection on your own contribution for which she is sincerely grateful.

E. E. B. BUTLER

Robert Young, Esq.,
CPRS

6

PRIME MINISTER

P1. not type
The attached.

If you agree I will reply in the attached terms to Robert Young. As you will see from Ferdie Mount's minute, Robert Young is one of the two members of the CPRS whom he wants to take into the Policy Unit.

F.R.B.

Approved

24 June 1983

Sorry -

I started

to sign it.